

Listen, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to H.R. 3773.

Statement on the Third Anniversary of the Death of Former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri of Lebanon

February 14, 2008

Today marks the third anniversary of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. The terrorist attack that killed Prime Minister Hariri, Minister Basil Fuleihan, and many other innocent victims was the spark that launched a transformation in Lebanon, as the Lebanese people demanded an end to the Syrian occupation and the restoration of their sovereignty.

Since the assassination of Prime Minister Hariri, many other Lebanese patriots have been murdered by those who seek to use violence and intimidation to derail progress toward a free, independent, and prosperous Lebanon. It is vital that the perpetrators of these attacks be brought to justice, and I, therefore, call upon the international community to redouble its support for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. The United States support for the Government and people of Lebanon remains firm and unwavering.

Syria, Iran, and their allies must end their efforts to undermine Lebanon's legitimate Government and to interfere in its political process. The Lebanese deserve a President elected in accordance with their Constitution, without preconditions and in an environment free from fear and intimidation.

The foundation of freedom in Lebanon, which Mr. Hariri helped lay, remains strong. We will continue to support the people of Lebanon as they work to rid the country of terrorism and violence and exercise their democratic freedoms in peace.

Interview With Matt Frei of BBC World News America

February 14, 2008

President's Upcoming Visit to Africa

Mr. Frei. Mr. President, thanks for joining us. You're famous for saying that you don't believe in opinion polls.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Frei. Do you have any idea how you rate in the countries that you're going to be visiting in Africa?

The President. No, sir, I don't.

Mr. Frei. Well, I've got news for you, and it's good news. You rate pretty well, sort of in the average 80s. Is that one of the reasons why you're going there? This is one part of the world where you're still very popular.

The President. I go where needed. And, no, I'm going there because I've got a firm, heartfelt commitment to the continent of Africa—and had ever since I became President. It's in our interests, national interests that we help people who are suffering from disease and hunger and hopelessness. The only way a radical can recruit is to find somebody that's hopeless. I mean, their vision is, like, really dark and dim.

Plus, I believe to whom much is given, much is required. And America has been given a lot, and it's required of us to help those who suffer. So mine is a mercy—a mission of mercy and a mission of the cold realism of the world in which we live—based upon the realism in the world in which we live.

President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

Mr. Frei. Your administration has given \$15 billion to treat AIDS in Africa, which is an unprecedented amount of money, and you want to double that amount yet again. This is a huge commitment, and yet the administration and you, personally, don't seem to be getting a lot of credit for it.

The President. Yes. You know, this is kind of tied to your first question about polls. Polls are nothing more than just like a poof of air. What matters is results. And ultimately, people will be able to make an objective judgment of a President and his administration and, in this case, a country's commitment.